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IOTAC

A STAFF STUDY TO ASSESS THE VALUE OF SERVICES PERFORMED BY THE RADIO STATIONS BRANCH, SR/OCR

I. PROBLEM

To assess the value of services performed by the Radio Stations Branch, SR/OCR in support of the activities of individual components of the Intelligence Community and certain U. S. government agencies outside the Intelligence Community.

II. FACTS

Recognizing the need for reliable information on foreign radio frequency usage and radio station particulars, the National Security Council, by Annex B of NSC 169, established in CIA a central file of such information.

A. PURPOSE

The purposes for establishing this file were specified as:

1. To facilitate the development and support of the United States' position in international negotiations regarding radio spectrum usage. This function would be accomplished by:

a. Assistance in selecting suitable frequencies for new or changed U. S. assignments.

b. Assistance in identifying foreign stations interfering with U. S. spectrum usage.

c. Preparation of allocation studies leading to new or adjusted frequency band allocations.

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II. FACTS (continued)

e. Contributing to the high validity military, economic, technical social and political content of the National Intelligence Surveys and basic studies.

f. Estimating trends and future developments in geographic areas, in spectrum usage, in new techniques in the Soviet Bloc telecommunications.

g. Observing the Soviet Bloc and other foreign radio frequency usage for new press and broadcast transmissions to assist FBID and USIA in the fulfillment of their missions.

B. PERSONNEL

NSC 169 recommended that a pilot operation be authorized consisting of a T.O. of 8 analysts and 12 additional personnel in support and supervisory functions with a subsequent build-up to strength of 50, consisting of 29 analysts and 21 support and supervisory personnel.

C. SOURCES

It was anticipated that the central file would bring together all available material on radio frequency usage and station particulars derived from monitoring operations and from collateral intelligence sources. In addition, the notifications of administrations to the International Frequency Registrations Board were to be included in the file. All governmental sources of such information were to co-operate in providing pertinent material to the file.

D. SCOPE

It was recommended that initial operation of the file should be with respect to Soviet Bloc countries, including China, with an eventual extension to all foreign areas.

E. ACCESS

Consistent with security regulations, information from the file was to be made available to authorized personnel of government in as unrestricted manner as possible. To this end, the lowest possible classification was to be placed on the information.

III. DISCUSSION

A. RSB has accumulated and made available to all offices of government a centralized file consisting of:

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III. DISCUSSION (continued)

1. Frequency usage, as compiled from various monitoring sources.
2. Radio station particulars, as reported in all-source intelligence documents, reports and studies.
3. Frequency assignment information as recorded by FCC, Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee and the International Telecommunication Union.

In fulfillment of its mission, written and oral reports and machine listings are prepared by the Branch for those eligible to receive them. Assistance has been given, at one time or another to all U. S. offices using radio communications to enable them to select new frequencies or to identify stations which were interfering with their transmissions.

Included among the offices which have requested this type of support are the Departments of Army, Navy, Air Force, and State; Coast Guard, FBI, OCSM and components of CIA.

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Support has been given to CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence

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in evaluating the effect of Soviet jamming of international broadcasts. Office of Research and Reports receives assistance from RSB in the preparation of studies of an economic nature relating to Soviet Bloc telecommunications. As a contribution to the preparation of the National Intelligence Survey, the U. S. Army Signal Intelligence Agency, which is responsible for the publication of Section 38, is given continuing support in the form of machine listings of frequency usage and assignment. The USIA and Foreign Broadcast Information Division of CIA/OC receive reports from RSB on a continuing basis covering broadcast effectiveness and press transmissions. A numerical summary of requests processed is included as Tab. A.

B. PERSONNEL

The Central File came into existence in May of 1954 as the Radio Stations Branch, BR/OCR with a T.O. of 20. In November of the same year the T.O. was increased to its present size of 30, consisting of 11 Intelligence Analysts (Commo), 14 machine personnel and 5 in supervisory and support positions.

C. SOURCES

RSB has expanded its sources of monitored information from a beginning of one, viz FCC, to sixteen, including various departments of government and private industry as well as independent monitoring

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III. DISCUSSION (continued)

organizations. Collateral information in the form of intelligence documents is processed into a dossier file daily and notifications to the International Frequency Registration Board have been brought under machine control.

D. SCOPE OF INFORMATION

To meet increasing intelligence requirements the file was expanded to include all areas of the world. The present file consists of approximately 130,000 items of frequency used by 10,000 identified radio stations in 240 countries or administrations. Station particulars information is available in 2,740 dossiers of individual radio stations or locations.

E. ACCESS

Information from RSB files is available to all departments of government at whatever classification they may be eligible to receive. An average of 300 requests for information are processed each month. RSB's unclassified publication "Observed Radio Frequency Usage" (ORFU) second edition, has a distribution list calling for 400 copies, which is an increase of 33% over the first edition. [REDACTED] X1X7 are included in this list. Interest in ORFU is illustrated by extracts from memoranda received from users of the publication, as presented in Tab. B.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In providing for the establishment of a Central File of Frequency Usage Information and Station Particulars, the National Security Council recognized the value of the information to be derived from this type of file. The steady increase in the number of requests serviced by RSB is a definite indication of the value placed upon this service by the various components of CIA and other departments and agencies of government.

It is the opinion of this committee the Radio Stations Branch is accomplishing its mission as described in Annex B of NSC 169 (revised by NSC 1910), and in so doing is providing service of value not only to the intelligence community, but to all departments of government concerned with radio communications.

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